

However, there

565 were great wealth differences between different talaka groups.
556 Traders, artisans, and farmers exhibited enormous wealth dif-
554 ferences between them and, as would be expected, these wealth
differences were reflected in the difference in size of house-
hold between different types of talaka. In the cities, wealthy
traders and well-to-do artisans occupied large compounds along
with the many members of their household; while non-specialized
laborers, low-status artisans, hand-to-mouth tradesmen, and
ordinary farmers lived with their nuclear families in small
compounds and at a much lower standard of living.

- 55 With respect to relative prestige there were also great
792 differences between various types of talaka. The most prestige-
ful activities are associated with Islam. Piety and study of
the Koran earn a man prestige. Devoting one's life to the study
of the Koran, by becoming a Malam, earns one great prestige,
though the Malam is dependent on charity and consequently can
never be a wealthy man. At the top of the religious hierarchy
there are individuals who may be powerful (since the Shehu is
advised by his Malams) and wealthy, but these are exceptional
individuals. Malams as a group enjoy great prestige, but little
power or wealth.

11. Changes in the Stratification System.

648 At the time of the present study (1956-1957), Bornu was
642 under British colonial rule, so that although the structure
178 of the empire, with the Shehu at its apex, was still in exist-
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000 for quite traditional purposes. If visitors come to town, the head of
 554 the settlement or the District Head informs the ma'aram as to how many
 562 are coming and for how long. She then organizes the cooking of the food
 476 and the water carrying for the strangers. Some informants claimed that
 574 the ma'aram could commandeer cooking utensils (not food) in the market
 without payment while preparing for visitors.

554 The status of the ma'aram is formally expressed (as are all
 576 superior-subordinate relations in Bornu) by those who say alangubero to
 her and those who do not. The junior must always say alangubero to the
 senior as a sign of respectful greeting. All women who consider them-
 selves tala (wives of peasant-commoners) greet her with alangubero
 while all wives of Mai (chiefs), i.e. women of the Shehu, the District
 Heads of the Lawan, or the wives of the Alkalai (the Muslim judge) ex-
 pect that the ma'aram will greet them by saying alangubero. In Magumeri
 this rule was followed, but also extended. The wife of the District
 Head's chief follower (the Wakil) came from a high status Maiduguri fam-
 ily and was personally very wealthy. She was accordingly given respect
 554 by the ma'aram. It is the ma'aram in each town who always leads the
 562 organization of the women during festivities, during rites de passage,
 or at large celebrations such as religious holidays.

Success and Stratification

- 55 After rational empirical causes are considered the success
 828 or failure of any individual in Kanuri society can be attributed to his
 good fortune. This quality is an essential and variable aspect of human
 nature, essential for success, and variable from person to person and
 within the same person through time. If an individual moves up the pol-
 itical scale, amasses wealth, harvests a good crop, is lucky in gambling,
 wins judicial decisions, obtains power and authority over others, or

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828 makes what power he has work well for him, avoids illness, poverty and derision, or does anything that can be measured in terms of achievement, then the degree of his success is the proof as to how much arziyi (good fortune, personal degree of success) he has in his hal (his nature, his being, his essence). Like Calvinistic pre-determination, arziyi is hoped for before the fact, and indicated or substantiated after the fact, of success.

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829 In answering questions about arziyi, informants of all classes and ranks are generally agreed that no matter how much success a peasant has with his farm, his wife, at cards, or at his craft work, he can never possibly come close to having as much arziyi as even a bad District Head or Village Area Head. When finer discriminations are asked for, however, disagreements sometime arise. Thus informants when questioned as to who has more arziyi, a trader in the city who recently bought a big truck and has a large compound of wives and followers, or a somewhat effete District Head, they answered according to how they ranked wealth alone as compared to political power. Since both of these dimensions of status are usually congruent when ranked high, the discrimination is often a difficult one. Nevertheless there is, at any one level in the society, a large measure of agreement about the amount of arziyi of the various social roles in the society at any one time. People from different levels of the society give somewhat differing pictures of the distribution of arziyi throughout the society. This results from their different vantage points and therefore differing opportunities for perceiving the social structure. Thus although many lower class people find it difficult to decide whether or not the effete District Head has more arziyi than the rich city trader, those close to the chief, including himself, feel that the rich trader has more.

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These figures show the spectacular rise in cash income which the Kanuri have enjoyed in the past two decades, and it is this fact basically, rather than increased productivity, which has accounted⁽¹⁾ for the widespread innovations of industrially produced import goods.

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Crop production is also affected by the lability of interpersonal relations. If it is personally profitable for an individual to become the subordinate of someone else, then he may leave his farm work in order to enter the service of his new superior. Many individuals (especially young men) suggested to the writer that if he would take them on as tada njina (sons of the house, pseudo sons) and give them money to trade, they would go anywhere in Bornu, whether or not they had crops growing at the time. Of course, if they had other sources of labour besides their own, then their crops would not be affected by their absence, but such considerations did not seem to be important to them.

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Finally, it should be realized that it is part of both the traditional and contemporary Kanuri conception of upward mobility that personal advancement is not to be found in farming. Achievement in Bornu is rather a function of profitable social relations and, more recently, western education. As social and cultural change proceeds, and progressively more full-time employment in the larger towns develops the urban growth and the attractions of the city for the peasant cultivator forms a continual pull on the rural population, and, therefore, on crop production. At present the rapid urban growth has not been felt as forcibly as it might be because of the large numbers of city dwellers who still maintain and work rural farms during the growing

SEASON.

(1) Cf. Winter, E.H., Swamba Economy, East African Studies, No. 5, (1955), especially pp. 41-44.